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SUBJECT: NEWS RELEASE
NEW CONSTRUCTION AT JAAP

FROM: INFORMATION OFFICE
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New production facilities incorporating the latest in pollution abatement equipment, will soon be a reality at the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant (JAAP).

Ground breaking for construction of the facilities took place today.

Funding of $54 million was approved in May, and initial contracts for the work, amounting to some $40 million, were let early in June. This first phase of construction is part of an overall 5 year, $230 million modernization program.

The modernization and pollution abatement project launched today is essential since the production equipment now in use at the plant dates back some 30 years to World War II. The operation is inefficient by modern standards, and contributes to the area pollution problems.

The new facilities will utilize the latest technological advances for more efficient production, reducing production costs by as much as 40 percent. Water and air contamination will be curtailed because of the use of the latest technology in process systems and the installation of new pollution control devices.

Looking forward to the completion of the modernization program, Plant Commander Lt. Col. Charles F. Ball noted, "The construction and installation of modern and highly efficient equipment at this time is a vote of confidence in the Joliet Army Ammunition Plant and the region as a whole. The new facilities should go a long way toward solving our pollution problems."

The method now used to produce TNT at JAAP is called the "batch process", a method that was developed over 70 years ago. In the batch manufacturing process a certain amount of toluene (a petroleum product) is nitrated by acid three times in three separate operations.

In a continuous flow operation, the toluene is fed into the system at a constant rate, and continuously nitrated as it moves through the system. This is a more efficient operation, yet safer because at any given time there is only a small amount of explosive present in a separated state.

Pollution abatement is accomplished by means of a fume recovery unit that is much more efficient than those now in use. Oxides of nitrogen, which would normally be emitted into the air, are removed from the system and are converted back into nitric acid which can be reused.

TNT production also produces polluted water, as great quantities of water are needed for the purification and cooling of the TNT. The water picks up TNT residues, which gives it a reddish coloring, during the process. Treatment facilities for this "red water" now exist, however, the new production facilities will have more adequate safeguards for making sure all the waste effluent is treated before it is reintroduced into a stream.

Pollution will be held down to a minimum in the new acid facilities, simply because of the more efficient production processes. Both the sulfuric acid regeneration plant and the direct strong nitric acid plant will be producing acid by recently developed methods in which a higher percentage of the chemical ingredients come out as product instead of emmissions.

The new ammonia oxidation plant will have a catalytic combustor which breaks down nitrous oxides into nitrogen and oxygen. These two elements are the basic components of air.

During the balance of the modernization program, the other nine batch process TNT lines are to be replaced with continuous flow lines. Other production facilities will be replaced with modern equipment, and more recent production techniques will be used.

The plant's two power houses are to be converted from a coal burning process to natural gas and fuel oil. This conversion should significantly reduce the emmission of pollutants from the power house stacks.

The first phase of the program, scheduled for completion in the summer of 1972, calls for the construction of new acid production facilities and three continuous flow TNT lines.

The D. M. Weatherly Co. of Atlanta, Ga., received the $2.8 million contract for construction of a 300 ton per day ammonia oxidation plant (AOP). The Monsanto Corp. of Chicago was awarded a $7.3 million contract for construction of a 815 ton per day sulfuric acid regeneration plant (SAR), and the Hoechst-Uhde Corp. of Englewood Cliffs, N. J., will construct a 280 ton per day direct strong nitric acid plant (DSN) at a cost of $7.7 million.

The $20.9 million contract for the construction of the three continuous flow TNT lines was awarded to the Cenco Piping Corp. of Janesville, Wis.

Another Janesville corporation, the J. P. Cullen Corp. was awarded the contract of $1.2 million for land site preparation where the acid facilities will be built.

Work to be accomplished under these contracts will be under the supervision of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Contractors are expected to make extensive use of sub-contractors from the local area.

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